

## PRESS-RELEASE 2

### ROUND TABLE «MOBI AVIATION»

#### MODERN BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE - SUCCESSFUL CARPATHIAN REGION

On February 25, 2021, the border regions took part in constructive discussions and meaningful presentations within the round table "Aviation in the Carpathian region" implemented under the



Hungary - Slovakia - Romania - Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 and initiated by the Maramures County Council of Romania.

The event was supported by the Zakarpattia Regional Council, Maramures County Council and Satu Mare County Council, Self-Government of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg region and Kosice Self-Governing Region with the active participation of international

institutions, namely: The International Association of Regional Development Institutions IARDI and the Association of Border Regions of the European Union AEBR. It is thanks to the partnership of government and self-government, regional development institutions, international organizations and professional institutions that we were able to organize an active discussion on this complex topic.

**Martín Guillermo Ramírez, General Secretary of the Association of European Border regions AEBR.**

AEBR is one of the most powerful international organizations involved in European policy-making at the European Union level, which includes more than 100 border regions, local governments, Euroregional associations, and international organizations that play an important role at the macro-regional level. "AEBR" accumulates the best experience of European countries in various areas of economic activity, including aviation development (author's note)

**Martín Guillermo Ramírez** provided practical recommendations on aviation development and the role of regional and local airports and informed about the experience of European border regions and trends in aviation development at the macroregional level, revealed the importance and prospects of air services in the Carpathian region via cluster approach.

**Martín Guillermo Ramírez:** The development of air travel is a rather controversial issue due to the challenges of the pandemic. However, there is a need to plan measures to restore capacity after overcoming the coronavirus and its consequences. That is why the development of aviation connections in the Carpathian region is one of the main elements of the development of the network of regional airports and the intensification of tourist services. In today's challenges, regional airports can play an important role. The development of a network of regional airports should consider aspects related to the type of terrain and locations that are far from major infrastructure centers, so work to improve infrastructure should also consider the current state of aviation in different regions. Airport development is a good way to develop infrastructure in general, but given the development trends, it

is necessary to ensure the criteria of environmental protection, as well as the trend of transition from exhaustible resources to renewable ones. In the sector of direct construction of airports and identifications of locations and logistics interchanges, the cornerstone is the combination of different transport connections, which gives the greatest advantage to the requirements and needs of the consumer.

At the EU level, in Brussels the ways to combine different types of services are under discussion, and the main measures in the field of aviation connections should be to move away from centralized planning and focus on the capabilities and needs of the regions. In this aspect of cooperation based on cross-border connections and good neighborliness, the integration of all modes of transport can give the best result, effectively involving the private sector for the proper distribution of investment.

Multimodality is of paramount importance in the development of regional airports: coordination of cooperation between several airports that need support in order to comply with relevant standards and inclusion in the flight network, which will take place after proper preparation of the logistics base and infrastructure.

Small aircraft are best adapted to the needs of the regions, but accelerating the development of any type of aviation connections is extremely difficult. That is why the sequence of steps and coordination of the project partners and stakeholders is a key aspect that will allow to attract and implement investments more effectively. The Carpathian region is considered as a zone of great opportunities, so its development and prosperity will affect the economic systems of all member countries of the Carpathian region. In the field of small aviation, the experience of joint international aviation projects is important, in particular the development of the Basel airport, which belongs to the French, but was built at German expense. Of course, it is currently difficult to compare the North Rhine region and the Carpathian region, but such examples already exist across the EU. Another example is the construction of small aviation airports on the border of Austria and Germany, considering the requests of the regions for local flights. Small towns and even villages decide to create local air locations / airfields, which significantly increases economic activity and has a great result with relatively small investments.

**At the end of the event, Martín Guillermo Ramírez, Secretary General of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) spoke at a press conference for Ukrainian media and praised the initiative "Aviation Connections in the Carpathian region", which needs further implementation and is in line with modern challenges:**

Recently, Europe has been trying to improve transport infrastructure, changing the vision of mobility, and introducing a multimodal approach to transport infrastructure development. That is why the importance of air travel is given a new priority along with the improvement of the entire transport system and infrastructure as a whole. Due to quarantine restrictions and their negative consequences, it is quite difficult to maintain a network of small airports, but it is small aircraft that can be an effective way to not only cross borders, but also connections in general.

Examples have already been discussed, such as Basel Airport, where the facility is located in one country, owned by another, and built at the expense of a third, as the construction of a small airport is

a huge impetus for infrastructure development. The main approach should be good strategic planning, coordination, and a cluster approach. This is what the project “Modern Border Infrastructure - Successful Carpathian Region” can be considered as example of the cluster approach. There are many such projects in Europe: we can even cite the example of Andalucía (Spain) which borders with Portugal and where a cluster approach is used in the development of transport infrastructure. Another sector is electrification and the use of hydrogen fuel, which can be considered the main direction of aviation development in the coming years.

*Press-service of the Association IARDI*